APPENDIX H

Request for Authorization to Establish
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
CIP 51.3818
Appalachian State University

I. Program Highlights

- Appalachian State University proposes the establishment of a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program of study.
- The part-time, hybrid program provides a flexible approach to prepare students to become family nurse practitioners (FNPs). Projected enrollment in year five is 77 with 24 students per cohort by year four.
- The proposed App State DNP-FNP degree aligns with the institutional mission that honors a founding commitment to educational access and excellence and the institution's rural mountain heritage through teaching, research, and service. The proposed program will serve to discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address the needs of individuals and society by providing practice ready FNPs who will contribute to the health and well-being of the region, particularly for rural and underserved populations.
- The proposed program is important because there is an ongoing shortage of qualified practitioners to address the health care needs of the nation, state, and region. Nurse practitioners are one of the fastest growing professions in the nation, and providing an affordable educational pathway that prepares nurse practitioners for desirable employment in a high-demand field will help to address a critical health care need.
- Graduates of the proposed program will be eligible to sit for the American Nurses Credentialing Center or American Academy of Nurse Practitioners certification examination for family nurse practitioner. Graduates will be prepared to care for individuals and families across the lifespan. They will be able to assess, diagnose, and treat episodic or chronic illness independently, or as part of a health care team, and provide preventive health care. Additionally, the proposed program equips them to focus on health promotion and disease prevention; order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests such as lab work and X-rays; and prescribe medication.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The Beaver College of Health Sciences at App State was established to improve health and wellness in western North Carolina and beyond. Capitalizing on existing resources, growth potential, and regional need, the addition of this clinical practice terminal degree provides an obvious and exceptional fit for the college and the university. It is anticipated that the DNP-FNP degree at App State will expand programming in western North Carolina resulting in increased educational opportunity and capacity and positively impacting enrollments for the key UNC System metric of increasing Health Science and STEM credentials.

2. **Student Demand.** Enrollments at App State have remained strong despite regional postsecondary declines. For every institution in the UNC System that provides DNP education, applications outpace acceptances for each year examined. A review of App State BSN graduate data from 2018 to 2023, identified 64 percent of respondents plan to seek further education with more than half indicating the likelihood of seeking a terminal degree. Among North Carolina registered nurses considering returning to school for additional academic education, the nurse practitioner

specialization remained the most preferred area of specialization across all time points. In 2023, U.S. nursing schools turned away 4,225 qualified applications from DNP nursing programs largely due to issues of capacity, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). With the projected enrollment cliff looming due to decreases in the college-age population nationally, offering the DNP degree at App State is designed for the post baccalaureate student who is established in the nursing workforce. North Carolina Board of Nursing 2024 licensure data indicates there are 56,450 registered nurses in North Carolina who report the baccalaureate degree as the highest degree earned. The proposed DNP-FNP would allow App State to capitalize on student demand for terminal degree attainment.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Recent reporting from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows nurse practitioners are one of the fastest-growing jobs in the country with a projected growth of 45 percent by 2032. A May 2024 AACN Nursing Shortage Fact Sheet indicates almost 30,000 new advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) will be needed each year through 2031, to meet the rising demand for care. In North Carolina alone, more than 700 position openings for family nurse practitioners are currently listed on NCWorks. With an average median salary of $121,610 (range $87,340 – $165,240) according to national wage data, the proposed program will expand the capacity of the existing health care workforce by adding more primary care providers at the local, regional, state, and national level.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** App State will provide a cost-effective graduate degree that allows registered nurses to advance their practice options in a high-demand field and obtain a terminal degree with minimal debt.

5. App State is requesting a tuition differential for this program. Graduate tuition and fees for academic year 2024-2025 full-time (9+ credit hour) rates are as follows.

Full-Time 2024-25 Graduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	**Resident**	**Nonresident**
Tuition	$5,233	$21,904
Tuition Differential	$2,500	$5,000
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$654	$654
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** As students are prepared to meet the requirements for licensure, certification, and practice, the proposed DNP program is designed to meet the rigorous accreditation requirements of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) as outlined in the *Procedures for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs, 2023.* The curriculum incorporates national practice standards and guidelines including the *National Task Force (NTF) for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education, 6th Edition* recommendations. All graduates will need to apply for state licensure and pass a national certification examination to become practicing FNPs. Cognate concentrations provide a unique feature to foster practice-ready providers with focal areas in public and population health, nursing education, or health care

administration. The nursing education cognate sequence will meet the requirements for nurse educators in North Carolina and allow optional national nurse educator certification.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** In total, six additional faculty will be hired for the proposed degree program. The CCNE has stringent requirements on faculty qualifications that include the provision of faculty who are: sufficient in number to accomplish the mission, goals, and expected program outcomes; academically prepared for the areas in which they teach; and experientially prepared for the areas in which they teach. Faculty in existing departments will provide support for cognate concentrations drawn from existing programming. Current qualified nursing faculty and additional adjunct faculty may be recruited who have defined expertise to support specialization areas. Lastly, current nursing faculty are well versed in mentorship of graduate students. The nursing faculty includes 10 graduate faculty members eligible to participate in DNP project mentorship.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** This proposed program will exist within the Department of Nursing at App State. The department houses a pre-licensure BSN and RN-BSN program that will provide well-qualified students for the new BSN to DNP degree program. In addition, current nursing faculty have some overlapping areas of expertise and will provide some educational support for the DNP program, mostly in the APRN core, interprofessional education, and as support for doctoral project completion. Outside of the Department of Nursing, select graduate-level cognate courses are available in the Department of Nutrition and Health Care Management, and Department of Public Health and Exercise Science. Each department has provided support for this proposal.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.)** The App State Belk Library has a range of journals and journal packages in the health sciences. These resources will provide relevant literature for students enrolled in the proposed DNP program to create evidence-based projects and quality improvement initiatives relevant to clinical practice. The Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies at App State is well positioned to support potential DNP students by providing professional development, academic support, and social and wellness opportunities. Materials to help prepare for the national certification examination have been included in the proposed budget. The proposed program is delivered primarily online but includes a week of intensive in-person coursework each semester at the App State Hickory campus. Appropriate classrooms and simulation laboratory space are planned within Hickory campus renovations and supported by current state appropriations. Additional funding is being solicited from appropriate foundations and grant funding sources to support initial equipment costs for the simulation laboratory. Initial budget analysis indicates the program will be self-sustaining in year four.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Currently, seven institutions within the UNC System award the DNP (CIP 51.3818) degree. Two do not provide an FNP option. Three, including University of North Carolina Wilmington, East Carolina University, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, provide a hybrid delivery FNP option. Winston-Salem State University and Western Carolina University offer a place-bound FNP option. Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRPA) office data indicates 64 percent of the online graduate students in Beaver College of Health Sciences programs are within 100 miles of the Boone campus. The addition of a DNP-FNP degree program at App State will have a significant regional impact in western North Carolina by increasing educational opportunity and capacity. The closest DNP-FNP programs in western North Carolina are Winston-Salem State University and Lenoir-Rhyne University.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** For every institution in the UNC System that provides DNP education, applications outpace acceptances from fall 2020 through fall 2023. The proposed curriculum, containing cognate concentrations to support and enhance FNP practice, will provide a unique programming feature within the UNC System.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. Building on a strong portfolio of existing clinical practice agreements, conversations about collaboration are ongoing. Initial conversations with institutions in our region of the state have identified potential for collaboration in partnership with indigenous and rural communities for project completion and clinical practice. Discussions with the Appalachian Institute for Health and Wellness also indicate strong support for the planned program and the potential for clinical placement. Additionally, preliminary conversations with the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) Family Medicine Residency Program show promise for interprofessional educational opportunities and simulation experiences.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.**
   The proposal was reviewed by relevant faculty and staff at App State, the head of the faculty senate, the head of the graduate council, the dean of the Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies, the provost and the chancellor. Strong support was provided at all levels.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, App State provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approve the Appalachian State University request to establish the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) (CIP 51.3818) effective fall 2026.

Request for Authorization to Establish
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Construction Project Management
CIP 52.2002
Fayetteville State University

I. Program Highlights

- Fayetteville State University (FSU) proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Construction Project Management.
- The purpose of the program is to prepare students with the knowledge, abilities, and skills to apply rigorous project management techniques and experience in the construction and facility management industries.
- The proposed BS in Construction Project Management degree program supports the mission of Fayetteville State University by advancing knowledge through the integration of teaching, learning, research, and public service. The institution strives to meet its students' educational, career, and personal aspirations, so that they are equipped with academic knowledge and practical experience to serve local, state, national, and global communities.
- The proposed BS has several strengths: the proposed program creates a pathway for bachelor's degree completion for North Carolina community college students who have associates degrees primarily in construction management technology, building construction technology, or civil engineering technology; the proposed program leverages military-affiliated students' project management experience in construction and offers a unique transitioning opportunity for active duty students from the Fort Liberty and ROTC programs; this degree program is offered both on campus and online, which creates multiple opportunities for students to continue working while pursuing a bachelor's degree; and finally, the proposed program provides an affordable education to rural students, first-generation students, and nontraditional students through the institution's NC Promise tuition.
- Graduates of the BS in Construction Project Management degree program will be qualified for employment as construction managers. The anticipated success rate in five years is based on estimates from the U.S. Department of Labor's CareerOneStop workforce tool, which reports that projected 2028 employment opportunities in North Carolina for construction managers with bachelor's degrees will be 22,400.
- The proposed BS degree program is expected to generate new enrollment growth for FSU with a projected enrollment in year five of 110 students (80 full-time and 30 part-time).

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The mission of FSU is to advance knowledge through the integration of teaching, learning, research, and public service. The institution strives to meet its student population's educational, career, and personal aspirations, so they are equipped with academic and practical knowledge to serve local, state, national, and global communities. The proposed BS in Construction Project Management supports the FSU and UNC System missions by imparting academic and practical knowledge with instructional and technological innovation to prepare graduates for careers in a growing occupational field for the regional economy.

2. **Student Demand.** According to the UNC System Interactive Data Dashboard for enrollment by major, 721 undergraduate students were enrolled in Construction Management majors in fall 2023, constituting a 58 percent increase in student demand from pre-pandemic.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics[1], the median annual wage for construction managers in 2023 was $104,900 per year. The job growth outlook between 2023 and 2033 is projected to be faster than average, at nine percent. The demand for construction managers can be estimated by presenting the employment statistics for the top 10 metropolitan areas in the nation: North Carolina has the highest employment per thousand jobs for this category (5.64) with the highest annual mean wage ($117,660). According to the workforce tool developed by CareerOneStop, projected 2028 employment for construction managers in North Carolina will be 22,400. With these statistics, North Carolina is listed among the top five states that will need the largest construction manager workforce. In addition, the projected construction work in the Sandhills region, FSU, Fayetteville Technical Community College, (FTCC) and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke campuses will require a substantial increase in the available construction management workforce, reported to be 380 in 2021, according to CareerOneStop.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The student debt level for graduates of the proposed BS in Construction Project Management program is similar to FSU students' average debt because the costs are similar to that of other programs in the Broadwell College of Business and Economics. According to the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard, the median debt for FSU students is about $23,000, given a monthly payment of $230. If a graduate earned the projected median salary in 2028 of $104,900, with a median student debt of $23,000, the debt-to-earnings ratio would be 22 percent.

5. FSU is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Full-Time On Campus 2024-2025 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	**Resident**	**Nonresident**
Tuition	(NC Promise Tuition) 1,000.00	(NC Promise Tuition) 5,000.00
Tuition Differential	N/A	N/A
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	2,584.00	2,584.00
Special Fees	N/A	N/A

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed BS in Construction Project Management degree program consists of 120 credit hours and features an internship to provide career exploration through placement in a construction management field office. The proposed degree program would be evaluated by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the accreditation organization

[1] https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/construction-managers.htm#:~:text=Constructionpercent20managerspercent20needpercent20topercent20prepare,proactivepercent20inpercent20findingpercent20newpercent20clients.

that independently reviews business schools with a rigorous external review of the school's mission, faculty qualifications, curricula, and ability to provide the highest quality programs. Currently, FSU's Broadwell College of Business and Economics has five undergraduate degree programs and one graduate degree program that are accredited by AACSB until 2027. If approved by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, as soon as the proposed degree program is launched, it would be added as a prospect program for initial evaluation for inclusion in the 2026-2027 AACSB reaffirmation visit.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** New course sections in business and construction project management core requirements will be covered by additional non-tenure-track faculty, extra duty, or adjuncts. Teaching schedules will be adjusted to ensure AACSB accreditation guidelines encompassing faculty intellectual contributions, assurance of learning, and program societal impact are met. The proposed degree program requires the hiring of three tenure-track and two non-tenure-track faculty members in year three who majored in construction management-related fields. The new hires and the current faculty will teach the program courses and program-related administrative activities. A shift in the current faculty workload would be minimal. The faculty line and extra duty funding would be supported by enrollment growth.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** FSU has related concentration and degree programs, including the BS in Business Administration, with concentration in management, and the BS in Accounting, that can support the proposed degree program. The Accounting, Banking and Finance, Business Administration, Information Systems, and Business Analytics programs will support the proposed program by offering business requirements and major elective courses. In year three and after, these programs would require expansion in the number of cohorts and sections. The estimated budget for this expansion is included in the proposal.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources, Library, Space, etc.** FSU has adequate facilities to support the proposed degree program. FSU's Charles Chesnutt Library maintains resources that would support the proposed degree program, and annual funds are budgeted to add books and resources specific to construction project management. The Broadwell College of Business and Economics has three labs supporting teaching and learning. Each lab is equipped with new computers and current technologies. The Systems, Applications, and Products (SAP) lab has cutting-edge IT technology and an "idea board" to facilitate collaborative brainstorming activities. The Health Informatics lab is designed as a modular space for flexible learning options, and the Financial Simulation lab offers real-time financial analysis and simulation learning opportunities. The SAP and Trading Room/Financial Simulation labs are scheduled for upgrades in 2025.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** There are five institutions in the UNC System that offer undergraduate engineering programs in construction management. These are similar but not identical to the proposed BS in Construction Project Management degree program. They include the following:
    - East Carolina University (on-campus delivery)
    - North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (on-campus delivery)
    - NC State University (on-campus delivery)
    - The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (on-campus delivery)
    - Western Carolina University (on-campus delivery).

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** FSU's proposed BS in Construction Project Management degree program is distinctively different from similar programs currently offered at other UNC System institutions, providing focus on project management. The program will also be the only program offering a BS in Construction Project Management in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties. Students will have the opportunity to get training in construction and project management, internship, practicum, and OSHA certification in one degree program. Furthermore, the proposed program will be centrally located in the state, providing access to students throughout the Sandhills and the many regional military bases in the area.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. FSU has discussed the proposed BS in Construction Project Management degree program with FTCC. FTCC agreed to promote the proposed program to those graduates completing carpentry, masonry, and construction-related associate degree programs. An articulation agreement that will enable associate degree holders from FTCC to transfer to the proposed Construction Project Management program is currently being developed. FSU also investigated collaboration opportunities with the Military Affiliated and Veteran Student Resource Center (ROTC). The Student Veterans' Center and the FSU at Fort Liberty Learning Center expressed interest in promoting the proposed degree program to military students who might have practical experience in military engineering construction projects.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The academic proposal was reviewed and approved by the following: the Department of Accounting, Finance, Healthcare Administration, and Information Systems Curriculum Committee; Dr. Jennifer Bushelle-Edghill, department chair; the Broadwell College of Business and Economics (BCBE) Academic Affairs Committee; Dr. Ulysses Taylor, dean of the Broadwell College of Business and Economics; the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee (chair, Dr. Kimberly Hardy); the Faculty Senate (chair, Dr. Zahra Shekarkhar); Dr. Nicole Lucas, SACSCOC liaison; and Dr. Monica Leach, provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, FSU provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board approves Fayetteville State University's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Construction Project Management (CIP 52.2002) effective spring 2025.

Request for Authorization to Establish
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Artificial Intelligence
CIP 11.0102
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

I. Program Highlights

- North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (N.C. A&T) proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The program will provide comprehensive education and training in AI, preparing students for careers in this rapidly growing field.
- The degree program aligns with the institution's mission by fostering academic excellence, innovation, and leadership in STEM disciplines. The program supports the university's commitment to addressing global challenges through education and research, particularly in fields critical to technological advancement and societal impact.
- The program's strengths include an interdisciplinary approach, practical hands-on experiences, and a curriculum designed to meet industry needs, producing graduates that are highly competitive in the job market across multiple industries.
- The degree program offers concentrations such as robotics and machine learning, alongside flexible online and hybrid delivery options. The program also features state-of-the-art labs and industry partnerships that provide students with practical experience and networking opportunities.
- Graduates will pursue careers in industries such as robotics, artificial intelligence, aerospace, health care, and more. Based on current trends and labor market data, the program anticipates a high success rate for its graduates with over 90 percent securing employment in this field within five years from graduation, reflecting strong industry demand for these skill sets.
- Projected enrollment in year five is 150 students.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** This program directly supports the institution's mission of "advancing knowledge through scholarly exchange and transforming society with exceptional teaching, learning, discovery, and community engagement." Furthermore, the program reinforces N.C. A&T's position as a leader in STEM education among historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). By offering cutting-edge AI education, the university continues its tradition of preparing students for successful careers in emerging fields, supporting its goal of producing graduates who are "equipped to meet the challenges of a complex, ever-changing world."

   According to the AI Index Report 2024 by Stanford University, only 4.08 percent of computer science graduates in the United States identify as Black or African American, with Hispanic or Latino graduates representing just 11 percent. As a public HBCU, N.C. A&T has a strong potential to attract students from underrepresented groups to the field of AI.

   The AI program also aligns with the UNC System's strategic priorities by: (a) increasing access to high-quality education in a rapidly growing field; (b) contributing to the state's economic growth by addressing workforce needs in the technology sector; (c) enhancing research and innovation capabilities across the UNC System.

2. **Student Demand.** North Carolina's AI labor market is projected to expand more than three times as fast as the overall labor market, driving the student demand for this BS in AI. N.C. A&T has very healthy enrollment trends in undergraduate programs in computer science, computer engineering, and information technology, with a growing demand for expertise and skills in these fields. In computer science, enrollment increased from 252 students in 2019 to 443 students in 2023, marking an impressive 75.8 percent increase. Similarly, computer engineering saw an increase from 180 students in 2019 to 210 students in 2023, which is a 16.7 percent rise. Information technology also experienced growth, with enrollment numbers rising from 312 students in 2019 to 359 students in 2023, reflecting a 15.1 percent increase.

   This growth is driven by the increasing importance of technology in various sectors, including artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, data science, and other emerging technologies. Introducing a standalone bachelor's program in AI at N.C. A&T will complement these existing programs by providing students with specialized training in AI, further enriching the university's offerings. Importantly, this new program will not detract from the quality or popularity of existing programs; instead, it will broaden the range of educational opportunities available to students while meeting the growing demand for AI expertise in both academia and industry.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Veritone, a leading AI services provider, analyzed a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Jobs Report. They summarized, "In April 2024, there were 14,117 vacancies in AI jobs, a 32 percent increase year-over-year. The median salary for AI jobs in April was $160,056, or $76.95 hourly, an increase from $144,986, or $69.70 during the same period last year." The trend is clear that meeting market demand requires more skilled computer science engineers and scientists in AI related fields.

   Following is a list of top AI-related jobs titles: AI engineer, machine learning engineer, software engineer, robotics engineer, data scientist, data analyst, data engineer. In addition, the following is a list of emerging job positions related to AI: AI ethics specialist, AI compliance manager, AI literacy educator, AI content auditor, cybersecurity analyst with AI expertise, AI prompt engineer.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The average first-time N.C. A&T student debt at graduation is $19,147, and the average transfer student debt at graduation was $15,531 for 2023. According to ZipRecruiter data, the median annual machine learning engineer's salary is $128,769 in 2024.[1] The median annual AI software developer's salary is $101,623 in North Carolina and $111,163 nationwide.[2] The BS in AI degree program at N.C. A&T will offer a cost-effective path for students to advance their careers and positions them to compete for well-paying jobs. The debt to earnings ratio ranges from 17.2 to 18.8.

5. **N.C. A&T is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.**

Full-Time 2024-25 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	**Resident**	**Nonresident**
Tuition	3,540.00	17,400.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	3,151.00	3,151.00
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The BS in AI program is meticulously designed to deliver high-quality education through a comprehensive curriculum totaling 120 credit hours. This curriculum includes core courses in machine learning, data analytics, robotics, and ethical artificial intelligence, alongside elective concentrations in areas such as natural language processing, computer vision, and autonomous systems. The program will be accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), ensuring that it meets rigorous academic and professional standards. Distinct features of the BS in AI degree program include its interdisciplinary approach, combining insights from computer science, mathematics, and data science, and cognitive psychology, as well as its flexible delivery formats, which include both on-campus and online courses to accommodate diverse student needs.

   The institution will achieve and sustain a high program quality through several strategic initiatives, continuing to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty members with strong backgrounds in AI research and industry experience, ensuring that students receive expert instruction and mentorship. Secondly, the curriculum will undergo regular reviews and updates to incorporate the latest advancements in AI technology and methodologies, maintaining its relevance and rigor. The institution will also invest in advanced technological infrastructure, including cutting-edge labs and software resources, to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities. Furthermore, strong partnerships with leading tech companies and research institutions will be established to facilitate internships, collaborative projects, and job placement opportunities for graduates. By focusing on these key areas, the institution ensures that the program remains distinguished, accredited, and capable of producing highly skilled graduates ready to excel in the dynamic field of artificial intelligence.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The BS AI program will initially be supported by 14 full-time faculty members dedicated to delivering high-quality coursework, providing supervision, and guiding students through recruitment, retention, and advisement. Each faculty member holds the necessary academic degrees and credentials, ensuring they are fully qualified to teach in this program.

   In addition, over 35 faculty members from the College of Engineering and the College of Science and Technology are actively engaged in pioneering research across diverse AI-related fields, including cybersecurity, autonomous systems, robotics, advanced manufacturing, information systems, cyber-physical systems, machine learning, deep learning, computer vision, large language models, generative AI, natural language processing, game design, data science, big data, cloud computing, software engineering, multi-agent systems, and social computing.

   To further strengthen the program, three new faculty members will be hired through the AI cluster-hire program for the academic year 2024-25. These new hires will contribute their expertise to the design and refinement of the program's curriculum, course offerings, learning objectives, and research initiatives. Recognizing the need for dedicated resources to support the program's growth and development, this proposal includes a strategic plan to recruit over the next four to five years, six additional faculty members who will be solely dedicated to the program.

8. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.)** The BS AI program features dedicated research laboratories located within the College of Science and Technology and the College of

Engineering. Smith and Price Halls host several key facilities, including the MetaAI Lab, AggieVERSE Lab, Center for Cybersecurity Education and Outreach, and the N.C. A&T Mental Health Hub. Furthermore, the engineering research labs are primarily situated in various engineering buildings on campus, such as McNair Hall, Graham Hall, Monroe Hall, and the Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex (MERIC). Notably, the MERIC, which opened in 2021, provides a cutting-edge scientific environment. Students have access to several specialized facilities, including the Center for Trustworthy AI, the Center for Cyber Defense, and the Cyber Defense and AI (CDA) Lab.

N.C. A&T's Bluford Library supports the university's nine constituent academic colleges by providing extensive access to technologies, research tools, resources, and a learning environment that enriches the scholarship and creative activity of students, faculty, and staff. There is a dedicated full-time library liaison to support the College of Engineering and College of Science and Technology faculty needs, in navigating and utilization of library resources for instruction and research.

9. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Although there are multiple computer science degrees with concentrations in artificial intelligence, there are no full degree programs named artificial intelligence in the UNC System at this time.

10. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** As one reviewer wrote, "The proposed program will be the first A.I. BS degree in the state, while other institutions such as NC State University and University of North Carolina at Charlotte have concentrations of A.I. within CS degree programs. The proposed program seems to have more emphasis on the A.I. related courses."

11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. Developing a standalone bachelor's program in AI at N.C. A&T holds significant promise, particularly as an HBCU. Furthermore, launching an AI degree program at N.C. A&T will involve interdisciplinary collaboration between the College of Engineering and the College of Science and Technology, reflecting a broader understanding of AI's impact across different fields.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed by departmental faculty and chairs, the dean of the College of Engineering, the dean of the College of Science and Technology, the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, provost, and chancellor.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, N.C. A&T provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approves the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Artificial Intelligence (CIP 11.0102) effective Spring 2025.

References

[1] https://www.ziprecruiter.com/Salaries/Machine-Learning-Engineer-Salary-in-North-Carolina
[2] https://www.ziprecruiter.com/Salaries/AI-Software-Developer-Salary--in-North-Carolina

Request for Authorization to Discontinue and/or Consolidate
Academic Degree Programs

East Carolina University – Bachelor of Science (BS) in Health Fitness Specialist
(CIP 31.0507)

Overview: The Bachelor of Science in Health Fitness Specialist (CIP 31.0507) at East Carolina University will be discontinued/consolidated effective fall 2024. This request to discontinue/consolidate the degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Bachelor of Science in Health Fitness Specialist (CIP 31.0507) will be discontinued and consolidated into the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology (26.0908). This action will improve efficiency by eliminating redundancy and overlap between the two programs. No faculty or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation/consolidation of the program. Currently enrolled students will have the option to complete the Bachelor of Science in Health Fitness Specialist (CIP 31.0507) or transition to the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology (26.0908).

Recommendation: UNC System Office staff recommend that the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approve the request of East Carolina University to discontinue/consolidate the delivery of the Bachelor of Science in Health Fitness Specialist (CIP 31.0507) effective fall 2024.

University of North Carolina Wilmington – Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Athletic Training

(CIP 51.0913)

Overview: The Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training (CIP 51.0913) at the University of North Carolina Wilmington will be discontinued effective fall 2024. This request to discontinue the degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training has been inactive in the University of North Carolina Wilmington Information System since 2018. The UNC Academic Program Inventory lists the program as active. This discontinuation action will reconcile the discrepancy. The discontinuation was initially made to comply with new regulations set by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. To meet the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education requirements, the university transitioned to the Master of Science in Athletic Training (CIP 51.0913) degree program. No students, faculty, or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation of the program.

Recommendation: UNC System Office staff recommend that the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approve the request of the University of North Carolina Wilmington to discontinue the delivery of the Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training (51.0913) effective fall 2024.

Western Carolina University – Bachelor of Science (BS) in Athletic Training Sports Medicine
(CIP 51.0913)

Overview: The Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training Sports Medicine (51.0913) at Western Carolina University will be discontinued effective fall 2024. This request to discontinue the degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training Sports Medicine has been inactive in the Western Carolina University Information System since 2022. The UNC Academic Program Inventory lists the program as active. This discontinuation action will reconcile the discrepancy. No faculty or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation of the program. The program stopped admitting students in fall 2020, and the last semester with enrolled students was spring 2022.

Recommendation: UNC System Office staff recommend that the University of North Carolina Board of Governors approve the request of Western Carolina University to discontinue the delivery of the Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training Sports Medicine (51.0913) effective fall 2024.